

The Harriman Institute Forum

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Andrei Sakharov, "Moscow and Beyond"



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Moscow and Beyond by Andrei Sakharov

The Harriman Institute Forum is privileged to present the following excerpt from Andrei Sakharov's final work, Moscow and Beyond 1986-1989 (translated by Antonina Bouis, to be published in January 1991 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.). Marshall Shulman was director of the Russian Institute [later, the Harriman] at the time of Sakharov's initial venture into samizdat, Peace, Progress, and Intellectual Freedom. Shulman wrote in the Saturday Review of November 23, 1968:

"[Sakharov's] essay is in the great tradition of the moral conscience and sense of social responsibility of the Russian intellectual, and it is a thrilling experience to come upon an expression of this tradition today, like a seedling breaking through the cement of a city pavement with its vital force...Not that Sakharov is a Western hero. He clearly has his own ideas, and reflects his own experience and formation. As he would expect, readers in the West will take issue with many specific points in his essay, but at least it is possible to have a fruitful and serious discussion with a man like this who thinks for himself....the best tribute we could pay to Sakharov would not be to lionize him for his criticism of his own country but to argue with him on a serious plane....May he know that his essay has been received and read and thought about, and that it has awakened hope for the time when the great humanistic tradition of Russia will speak to the world, aloud and unafraid."

preface

In December 1986, my wife Lusia and I were allowed to return to Moscow—after seven years of isolation in Gorky, our exile had come to an end.

My Memoirs, which I had basically completed by November 1983, together with Lusia's account of our years in exile [*Alone Together*, by Elena Bonner, Alfred A. Knopf, 1986], tell the story of my life from childhood through December 1986. In Moscow in 1987 and in Newton and Westwood, Massachusetts, in 1989, I was able to edit my manuscript, and also to describe events from the time of our arrival back in Moscow through my participation in the June 1989 Congress of People's Deputies. Although I originally intended to include these additional chapters in *Memoirs*, they grew in length, and I decided to publish them as a separate book.

I would like to express my appreciation to Efrem Yankelevich, Edward Kline, Ashbel Green, Nina Bouis, and everyone who worked on *Moscow and Beyond*. Lusia was its first editor.

ANDREI SAKHAROV
Moscow
December 1989

return from Gorky (1986)

Lusia and I were almost buried under the load of those first few months; but we had no choice, we had to carry on. What has life in Moscow been like since our return? I have to spend time preparing written responses (which Lusia types out) for almost all major interviews; I just can't do it any other way. People pass through the house endlessly—and we so want to be alone. Lusia cooks not just for two, as in Gorky, but for a whole crowd. Long after midnight, it's by no means uncommon to find Lusia, despite her heart attacks and her bypasses, mopping the landing—our building is self-service—and myself still at work on a statement to be issued the following day. Besides interviews, there are hundreds of things to do: another letter to Gorbachev, a foreword for Anatoly Marchenko's book, preparations for the Forum. And people, people, people: friends, acquaintances, would-be acquaintances, refuseniks, foreigners in Moscow who feel duty-bound to meet Sakharov, European ambassadors, Western scientists: it's a constant madhouse.

That was our everyday life. Perhaps I have delusions of grandeur, but I want to believe that this wasn't all wasted motion or a game. I don't mind if the process was inefficient so long as it actually promoted the release of political prisoners, the preservation of peace, and disarmament.

One subject that comes up in every interview is my attitude toward Gorbachev and *perestroika*. Actually, it was important to work out an answer to this question for my own sake. While we were still in Gorky, we began to notice astonishing changes in the press, the movies, and television. Vaksberg's articles on the Supreme Court contained passages that a short while before would have led to his indictment for slandering the Soviet system. For example, he re-

ported that 70 percent of the letters written to the procurator's office by persons seeking a reexamination of their cases and receiving the standard response—"No basis for review"—lacked any notation showing that the file had been pulled and checked; in other words, the response had been automatic and perfunctory. He wrote up the case of fourteen people who had confessed to a murder and had been tried, convicted, and executed, and who were later shown to have had no connection with the crime; the confessions must have been extracted by beatings or other torture.

Glasnost, thank goodness, is continually breaking new ground, and has made more headway in the press than anywhere else. But while frank and open public debate serves as the cutting edge of *perestroika*, action doesn't necessarily follow; the gap between word and deed has been growing. And some areas are still in taboo: heretical opinions about international policies, criticism of leading Party figures (although government ministers are now fair game), most statistics, information about prisoners of conscience, and so on. I have been disturbed by the skimpy and one-sided coverage of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, as well as the reporting of certain other sensitive subjects. Unfortunately, *glasnost* seems to be spinning its wheels in just those cases where it might most benefit society. Another sign of trouble was the difficulty in ordering 1989 subscriptions for the more politically daring periodicals. This was apparently a temporary concession—since revoked—to opponents of *perestroika*.

Perestroika involves more than *glasnost*. Important social and economic changes are in process: greater autonomy for industrial and commercial enterprises; decentralization of management; a more important role for local soviets, which in the past have been overshadowed by Party bodies. The Central Committee Plenum held in June 1987 was devoted to economic reform and the proposal to free enterprises from detailed central planning and to grant them complete financial independence. Firm decisions resolving these vital questions, even if they have to be implemented gradually, could make a real difference. During the January 1987 Plenum, Gorbachev called for changes in promotion policy and in the selection of Party and government officials and industrial managers that would have a significant impact on our political system—if they are adopted. Plans for reform of the Criminal Code and other legislation were also discussed at that Plenum. And there was new thinking about international issues as well, but I will defer my comments on that subject.

Overall, however, examples of *perestroika* in practice—as distinct from rhetoric—are rare, and the few that do exist demonstrate its partial, tentative, and erratic character. I've mentioned my misgivings about the inconsistent and still incomplete release of prisoners of conscience. The Law on Individual Enterprise is timid and vague: it does not provide stimulants for entrepreneurial activity; it severely limits the number of persons eligible to participate; and it contains many other restrictions. Its thrust was further blunted by the practically simultaneous adoption of a law on "uneamed" income that in effect allows criminal prosecution of individual entrepreneurs and was initially applied in ridiculous ways. As soon as the Law on Cooperatives was passed, the Ministry of Finance established a tax rate so high (up to 90 percent of income) that it virtually barred the development of cooperatives. The crucial Law on State Enterprise does not contain guarantees for enterprise autonomy in planning and financial matters, even with respect to the disposition of profits.

One aspect of *perestroika* that enjoys my whole-hearted support is the campaign against alcoholism; but here, too, experience has shown that things weren't thought through with sufficient care.

What is my overall appraisal? In 1985, while confined in Semashko Hospital, I watched one of Gorbachev's early television appearances, and I told my roommates (I had no one else to talk to): "It looks as if our country's lucky. We've got an intelligent leader." I repeated this opinion in December 1986 during my first interview by satellite, and my initial, positive reaction has remained basically unchanged. It seems to me that Gorbachev, like Khrushchev, is an extraordinary personality who has managed to break free of the limits customarily respected by Party officials. What, then, explains the inconsistencies and half-measures of the new course? The main stumbling block, as I see it, is the inertia of a gigantic system, the resistance, both passive and active, of innumerable bureaucratic and ideological windbags. Most of them will be out of a job if there is a real *perestroika*. Gorbachev has spoken of this bureaucratic resistance in some of his speeches, and it sounds like a cry for help.

But there's more to it than that. The old system, for all its drawbacks, worked. Changing over to a different system involves the problems of any transition: a lack of experience in working in the new way, a scarcity of managers of the new type. After all, people had grown accustomed to the old system, which at least guaranteed

a minimal standard of living. Who knows what the new one will bring?

And lastly, Gorbachev and his close associates themselves may still not have completely thrown off the prejudices and dogmas of the system they have inherited.

The restructuring of our country's command-type economic system is an extremely complex matter. Without the introduction of market relations and elements of competition, we are bound to see serious shortages, inflation, and other negative phenomena. In actual fact, our country is already in economic trouble; everywhere, food and other necessities are in short supply.

Another thing concerns me greatly—the zigzags on the road to democracy. It seems as if Gorbachev is trying to gain control of the political situation and strengthen his personal power by compromising with the forces opposed to *perestroika* instead of relying on democratic reforms. That's extremely dangerous. Only a nationwide swell of initiative can give substance to democracy, and our chiefs are not ready for this—as shown, for example, by the 1988 law placing unconstitutional restrictions on meetings and demonstrations.

The situation is incredibly snarled and riddled with contradictions. The progressive replacement of key personnel, the country's objective need for *perestroika*, and the fact that "the new always beats the old" (to quote Stalin's famous phrase that was drummed into our heads when I was young) should all work in Gorbachev's favor. He has four levels that he can use to move the country forward: *glasnost* (this is proceeding under its own steam); the new personnel policies; the new international policies aimed at slowing the arms race; and democratization.

the moscow forum

The Forum for a Nuclear-Free World and the Survival of Mankind opened in Moscow on February 14, 1987, and lasted for three days. This was a well-organized undertaking, staged primarily for propaganda purposes. Evgeny Velikhov, a vice-president of the Academy, was one of the directors of the Forum, and he invited me to take part....I met Velikhov for the first time in early January. The Italian physicist Antonino Zichichi had come to Moscow with the idea of organizing a "World Laboratory," an international interdisciplinary re-

search center that would work on ten to thirty scientific problems of great practical or theoretical significance.

That evening [after the first seminar], Zichichi and his wife came for a visit, unexpectedly accompanied by Velikhov—he was apparently under orders not to leave us alone together. A lively conversation took place around the kitchen table. Velikhov, wanting to seem like a "regular fellow," uncorked a bottle of wine, and in general his manner was informal, almost as if he were at home. At the same time, he behaved with a certain tact even, perhaps, a measure of respect. It was all a bit ironic, since Velikhov, like other Academy big-wigs, had told all sorts of fairytales about me while I was in Gorky, even during my hunger strikes. (In a conversation with one foreigner—Velikhov was evidently not aware of our friendly relations—he established some sort of record in this campaign, when he referred to information received from my first wife, who "lived in his building": Klava died in 1969, and Velikhov lives in a one-family house.)

The final session of the Forum took place on the 16th, in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses. The section chairmen delivered reports, and then Gorbachev addressed the assembly....After Gorbachev concluded, there was a great banquet. We received place cards—my seat was at the back of the hall with a group of physicists. We helped ourselves from buffet tables set with food and drink, including Georgian wine, despite the anti-alcohol campaign. I learned later from von Hippel [Frank von Hippel of Princeton, an expert on the biological effects of radiation] that while I was busy talking to foreign and Soviet fans, who didn't leave me in peace for a second, Gorbachev had been sitting at the other end of the room with senior government officials. (Von Hippel had been placed at Gorbachev's table and Mrs. Stone sat next to Raisa Gorbachev.) If I had known at the time, I would have tried to make my way to him in order to say a few words about prisoners of conscience and the package principle. More important, our encounter would have had political significance, and its absence was seen as a minor victory for the anti-Gorbachev forces.

Two incidents should have alerted me to the situation, but I caught on to their significance only after the fact. While waiting for

the affair to begin, I had spoken with many people, including the writer Daniil Granin. Someone, apparently an aide from Intourist (or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or the KGB), brought over an elderly foreigner, announcing, "Andrei Dmitrievich, Mr. Hammer would like to speak with you."...Our conversation was interrupted, however, by the famous ballerina Maya Plisetskaya, who led him away. The thought occurred to me that Hammer could pass on to Gorbachev the list of nineteen prisoners in the special-regimen camp whose fate particularly worried us. Just before the banquet began, I spotted the aide who had introduced me to Hammer (this time he had the actor Peter Ustinov in tow), and I asked him to escort me to Hammer. "I'll ask him to come to you." "That wouldn't be polite, I'll go to him. Please find him for me." He replied vaguely, and then Hammer did in fact come over, and I gave him the list for Gorbachev. Hammer, however, didn't seem very interested in the subject of prisoners.

I should have guessed then that Hammer was seated near Gorbachev and their table was off limits for me. Later, when I wanted to go to the toilet and walked toward that end of the room, two burly men in well-cut suits stopped me. "You can't go that way. Use the facilities at the other end." I still didn't realize that Gorbachev was close by, but even if I had, I don't know whether the security men would have let me through. (Bodyguards, after all, are serious people.)

Stephen Hawking

I also met Stephen Hawking, known for his work on black holes and the radiation associated with them known as "Hawking radiation." I had earlier heard of his efforts on my behalf; now, our brief encounter and exchange of scientific cliches somehow led to a profound empathy between us.... I saw Hawking several times, and once was present at a seminar where he "spoke" with a dozen scientists about the underlying principles of quantum mechanics and the "wave function of the universe" discussed in a paper he published, together with James Hartle, in 1984. During the seminar he wittily turned Einstein's celebrated epigram upside down, saying "God not only plays dice, but He throws them so far that they're beyond our reach."

After our first conversation, Hawking had given me reprints of several of his recent papers, including one on the direction of the arrow of time. I was glad that he had accepted the criticism of his colleague Don Page, concerning the erroneous assumption that the arrow reverses at the moment of maximum expansion of the universe and *maximum* entropy. I mentioned to Hawking that reversal is possible only under conditions of *minimum* entropy (but was too shy to bring up the simplest example, a closed universe in a state of false vacuum with positive energy and zero entropy). Hawking moved his fingers and the computer uttered its mechanical "yes" to signify his agreement. I regret my failure to tell him that I had first mentioned the idea of the reversal of the arrow of time in a state of minimum entropy in 1966 and had returned more than once to that theme.

A man I didn't know was hovering nearby while I was talking to Hawking. He later introduced himself, saying "I'm Page." He opened an English-language Bible to a marked passage in the Gospel according to Matthew, and apparently wished to give it to me as a present. But I was embarrassed and didn't accept it—I don't read English that fluently, and besides, we have a Russian-language Bible, which we know well....

Hawking's face and eyes haunted me for a long time.

Lusia

It is conceivable murdering Lusia had been discussed at some level of the KGB... Murdering Lusia might have seemed like a solution for the "Sakharov problem," but apparently direct action—if it was ever discussed—was ruled out. Nonetheless, the persistent harassment I have described in my *Memoirs* could be construed as an attempt to eliminate Lusia without resorting to outright murder. After her heart attack, they may have hoped that nature would take its course, especially if they could keep doctors from treating Lusia, and could prevent her from traveling abroad—the tactics adopted....Many people thought Lusia was the instigator of my hunger strikes; others expected her to remain abroad rather than return to her husband and to exile.

And even now, those who disapprove of something I have done—my defense of prisoners of conscience, my participation in the Forum, my attitude toward Gorbachev or *perestroika*, my criticism of SDI or of the package principle—tend to blame Lusia's influence.

Just yesterday, [written in July 1987], a refusenik, convinced of Lusia's total power over me, urged her to temper my criticism of SDI, so as not to alienate my supporters. According to him, my former friends are saying that "Sakharov isn't Sakharov anymore." Actually, Lusia's influence on me is enormous but not unlimited, and it operates on another plane than SDI, disarmament, and similar issues—it primarily affects questions involving human relations. It is based not on duress, but on our mutual love and our happy life together.

the future

What other thoughts did I have a year after my return to Moscow? What hopes for the future?

I dreamed of science. Perhaps I would never accomplish anything of importance. I'd lost too many years, first in work on weapons, then in public activity, and finally in exile in Gorky. Science demands utter concentration, and all these things were distractions. And yet, just being here to see the great advances in high-energy physics and in cosmology is an exhilarating experience that makes life worth living—and of course, there are all sorts of other things in the world that everyone can enjoy.

I expected to maintain at least a nominal interest in some of the undertakings where my name could make a difference: controlled thermonuclear fusion; the underground siting of nuclear reactors; and the use of underground nuclear explosions to control earthquakes.

I realized even then that Lusia and I would not be able to escape from our civic concerns, even after all the prisoners of conscience were released and large-scale emigration was permitted. We would have to adapt to the challenges that were bound to come while at the same time preserving our integrity.

... and beyond (1989)

After a two-year interval, I now [July 1989] have an opportunity to bring my account of events up to date and describe my participation in the most significant event of recent years—the Congress of People's Deputies. During this period, there have been fundamental changes in the thinking of all sections of the population on public issues, and I myself look at many things differently, than I did two years ago, or even six months ago.

In the summer of 1987 Lusia, Ruth, and I spent a month in Estonia, in a village called Ötepää.... This was my first visit to the Baltic Republics, other than brief trips to Tallinn for a conference and to Vilnius for Kovalev's trial.... We were amazed by Estonia's high standard of living, the organization and tempo of economic activity, the patent contrast to European Russia. We had driven from Moscow in our new car, and after passing through the neighboring Pskov region, where the pothole-ridden roads hadn't been repaired in years, the superior Estonian highways came as a pleasant surprise. We saw neat, well-spaced farmhouses, peasants preparing fodder with their mowers for their cows (several per farm) and working the fields with their tractors. Vats of fresh milk were left under awnings by the side of the road to be picked up by special trucks and taken to the dairy.

We often heard people in Estonia say that they work harder and better, and therefore they live better. That, of course, is only a small part of the truth, the superficial explanation. The deeper reason is that the steamroller of socialism passed over their land later, in a watered-down, rather slipshod fashion: it had less time to do its destructive work. In the "old" Republics that have been part of the USSR from the very beginning, peasants have been debased to a far greater degree—in some instances, they were physically eliminated—and society is more conspicuously divided into separate castes, including a Party bureaucracy, essentially parasitic in nature. It's no accident that leasehold, cooperative, and, especially, private forms of economic activity are developing slowly in those regions, hindered almost openly by local Party and state organs. The Baltic Republics have set an example for our whole country with their popular movements for a genuine, not a fictitious *perestroika* and for a radical resolution of nationality problems through economic autonomy and the

adoption of a new compact between the Union and its constituent Republics.

the leader

[At] my first face-to-face encounter with Gorbachev, he appeared intelligent, self-possessed, and quick-witted in discussion, and the policies he was pursuing at the time impressed me as consistently liberal, fostering a gradual growth of democracy by means of fundamental reforms.

Of course, I wasn't satisfied with the half-measures of the government, several seemingly retrograde actions, and the defects of certain legislation (for instance, the law penalizing "unearned" income), but I attributed these failings mainly to the constraints that inhibit every leader, especially a reformer, and to the rules of the game prevailing in the milieu in which Gorbachev had made his career and in which he was still operating. On the whole, I saw him as the initiator and pace-setter of *perestroika*, and his attitude toward me seemed respectful, even sympathetic.

In February 1988, Nagorno-Karabakh exploded. Events there demonstrated the falsehoods of official propaganda extolling the "indestructible friendship of the peoples of our country," and revealed the gravity of interethnic conflicts, which earlier had been kept submerged by terror and the absence of *glasnost*. These conflicts, as we know now, affect the entire country.

For over sixty years the Armenians of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region [about 70 percent of the region's population] were oppressed by the Azerbaijanian authorities. *Perestroika* encouraged Armenian hopes for a change in this intolerable situation. In February the regional Soviet of People's Deputies appealed to the Supreme Soviets of Azerbaijan and of Armenia to transfer jurisdiction over Karabakh from the Azerbaijan SSR to the Armenian SSR. Azerbaijan refused, and a pogrom directed against the Armenian inhabitants of Sumgait [a city in Azerbaijan, not far from Baku] followed. The reaction of the country's central leadership continually lagged behind events and appeared inexcusably vacillating and unprincipled. I will go further: official policy still seems unjust, one-sided, and provoc-

tive. The central press and television, with few exceptions, turned out to be equally partisan and tendentious. In this critical situation, *glasnost* fell by the wayside (and this default was to be repeated on many similar occasions).

For the first time, I began to think about the negative aspects of the new policies, and what might be causing them.

debate

The whole country watched the telecast of the Presidium debate; it had a horribly depressing effect on us, and I think on many others as well. Gorbachev's approach was overtly prejudiced: it was clear that his mind was made up and that he favored Azerbaijan. He chaired the meeting in dictatorial fashion, displaying contempt for dissenting opinions and often blatantly discourteous, particularly to the Armenian members. He kept interrupting speakers, and interjecting comments on their remarks. He cut short the rector of Yerevan University, Sergei Ambartsumian, and asked, "Who gave you the right to speak for the people?" Ambartsumian turned pale, but managed a dignified response, "My constituents," and went on with his speech.

We don't know what lay behind Gorbachev's anti-Armenian and pro-Azerbaijani position, which persisted even after a devastating earthquake struck Armenia. Gorbachev could have turned the Armenians into the vanguard of *perestroika*, into loyal and hard-working allies. (The slogans of the first months of the nationalist movement in Armenia made this plain.) The Armenians would have quickly made up the production lost through strikes. But Gorbachev chose a different path. Why? Some say that this was grand strategy, a reflection of the great role Islam plays in the world and in our own country. Others, like Yakovlev, attribute it to the fear of new Sumgaits. And still others warn that you can't create a precedent of territorial change in a country with so many "hot spots." All these arguments fail to convince me: fundamental considerations of justice cannot be ignored. Some people ascribe Gorbachev's attitude to supposed links with the Azerbaijani mafia* [*In the Soviet Union, the term "mafia" is widely used for any ethnically based, loosely organized network of people engaged in the peddling of political influence and favors, and often in overtly illegal activities] or to family ties. Since biographical information on our leaders is hard to come by—*glasnost* does not

apply to the highest circles of our society—such rumors flourish, with or without any basis in fact, and it is impossible to either prove or disprove them.

Memorial

Yuri Afanasiev presented a petition from Memorial with several thousand signatures to the Nineteenth Party Conference. The Conference authorized the erection of a monument to the victims of repression (a similar resolution had been adopted by the Twenty-second Party Congress in 1961, but it was never implemented); no mention was made of Memorial's other proposals. The movement began to organize, and a number of cultural unions, including the Cinematographers' Union, the Architects' Union, and the Designers' Union, as well as *Literaturnaya gazeta*, agreed to serve as sponsors. A bank account was opened for donations to the Memorial Society and for the proceeds realized from special concerts, lectures, and films. At this stage, a poll was taken on Moscow's streets: passersby were asked to name those they would like to see on Memorial's Council, and those who received the greatest number of votes were invited to serve on the Society's governing body. I was among them, and I accepted my nomination, as did the majority who received the public's endorsement.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn declined. In December 1988, while in the United States, I called him to extend congratulations on his seventieth birthday. During our conversation, Solzhenitsyn explained his action. He mentioned first of all the decision to exile him from his homeland in retaliation for *The Gulag Archipelago*. This was illogical, since Memorial could hardly be held responsible for the actions of the Soviet authorities. His second argument was his fear that Memorial's ideological line would clash with his own historical concepts. Expanding on this thought, he said that he was absolutely against limiting criticism to Stalinist repressions, or, still worse, focusing on the repression of those who were in fact accessories to the crimes of the regime, crimes which had begun in 1917 and continued to this day. The physical destruction of the people and their best representatives, the corruption of the population, the deceit, cruelty, hypocrisy, and demagoguery engaged in for the sake of power and the false goals of Communism were links in a single chain of events that

had been initiated by Lenin. His personal guilt before the people and history was enormous, but discussion of Lenin's crimes was still a taboo subject in the USSR, and so long as that remained true, Solzhenitsyn wanted no part of Memorial.

This seems the appropriate place to complete the story of my December 1988 conversation with Solzhenitsyn. I called from Newton in the morning. His wife, Natalya, answered the phone. We spoke for several minutes before she called Solzhenitsyn, noting that this was an exception, since he almost never comes to the phone himself. After completing the conversation about the Memorial Society and in response to his wishes for success, I said a few words about the importance of his work as a writer, and then added, "Alexander Isayevich, there should be nothing left unsaid between us. In your book *The Oak and the Calf* you hurt me deeply, insulted me. I'm speaking of your pronouncements about my wife, sometimes explicit and sometimes without naming her, but it's perfectly clear whom you mean. My wife is absolutely not the person you depict. She's an infinitely loyal, self-sacrificing, and heroic person, who's never betrayed anyone. She keeps her distance from all salons, dissident or otherwise, and she's never imposed her opinions on me."

Solzhenitsyn was silent for several seconds—he probably wasn't accustomed to direct rebukes. When he said, "I would like to believe that it is so." By ordinary standards, that wasn't much of an apology, but for Solzhenitsyn it was apparently a major concession.

travel abroad

On October 20, the same day I was elected to the Academy's Presidium, the Politburo lifted the ban on my travel abroad. The International Foundation's officers were extremely interested in getting permission for me to travel. Velikhov had twice appealed to Gorbachev by letter and finally mentioned the matter to him personally during a reception for the President of Brazil, and Gorbachev promised to put the question to the Politburo. But probably the decisive stroke was when Yuli Khariton [Sakharov's former boss at the Kurchatov Atomic Energy Institute], at Velikhov's request, vouched for me in writing (I believe he repeated his endorsement orally, at the Politburo meeting of October 20). Khariton may have said that I

couldn't possibly know anything of interest after twenty years of exclusion from top-secret work or that I was a person who could be trusted never under any circumstances to reveal state secrets, but, whatever it was, it did the trick. This was definitely an uncommon act of civic courage on Khariton's part, which demonstrated personal trust in me.

On November 6, I traveled abroad for the very first time in my life, in order to attend a board meeting of the International Foundation in Washington, D.C.

IN MY MEETINGS with President Reagan, President-elect Bush, Secretary of State Shultz, and Prime Minister Thatcher, there were many questions on human rights. I seem to be reaping the fruits of my activity in the 1970s and 1980s. My conversations with Shultz and Thatcher focused on the conditions that the West should set for holding an international conference on human rights in Moscow.

Reagan was a charming host. I tried to talk to him about SDI Wars in the broad framework of international strategic stability and disarmament, but he somehow managed to ignore my arguments and repeated his usual claim—that SDI will make the world a safer place.

Teller & SDI

Unfortunately, I heard the same thing from Edward Teller. I met him on his birthday, and we spoke for thirty minutes in relative privacy just before a formal banquet was held in his honor in the ballroom of a Washington hotel. I said a few words about the parallels in our lives, about the respect I had for the principled and determined manner in which he defended his views, regardless of whether I agreed with them or not. (I repeated these thoughts publicly in my speech at the banquet.) Teller spoke about nuclear energy; we had no disagreements on that subject, and we quickly found a common tongue.

I turned the conversation to SDI, since my main reason for coming to see him was to discover the basis of his support for this concept. As I understood it, the moving force behind his promotion of SDI is a profound and uncompromising distrust of the Soviet Union. Tech-

nical difficulties can always be overcome if need be—they can and will be solved now that a system of defense from Soviet missiles has been put on the agenda. A shield is better than a sword. Behind all this there was the unspoken thought: We have to develop this defense first. You're trying to scare us off, to sidetrack us, while you've been working in secret on the same idea for years. We were summoned to the banquet before I had a chance to reply.

Tanya was waiting and warned me, "You have exactly fifteen minutes for your speech, otherwise we'll miss the last shuttle." I managed to say everything I wanted to: I spoke for five minutes on fate and sticking to principle; five minutes on the role of MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction); and five minutes on the military, economic, and technological futility of SDI—it would merely raise the threshold of strategic stability.

I also said that SDI fosters escalation from conventional to nuclear warfare, adds to the uncertainty of the strategic and scientific situation, thereby encouraging dangerous and desperate adventures, and complicates disarmament negotiations. At the end of my talk, Tanya and her husband, Efrem, grabbed me and whisked me out of the room. I barely had time to say goodbye to Teller and wave to the audience. Later, one newspaper published an article saying that Sakharov had been hustled away by KGB agents assigned to him. As we were leaving, an officer in full-dress uniform decorated with medals and ornamental cords greeted me and wished me luck; it was Lieutenant James Abrahamson, director of the SDI program.

WHEN I MET with Bush, I discussed the importance of an American undertaking not to initiate nuclear warfare. At the same time, the USSR should confirm its existing pledge of no first use in a constitutionally binding form. This would create an atmosphere of trust and facilitate arriving at strategic equilibrium in conventional weapons. The idea that nuclear weapons could be employed to halt a conventional-arms offensive creates an illusory sense of security. Nuclear warfare would be equivalent to the suicide of the human race; no one would take the risk of beginning it, since escalation would be inevitable, and there would be no way to stop it. Threats involving a weapon that will never be used are simply not credible. And the false efficacy attributed to Mutual Assured Destruction has encouraged Western neglect of conventional weapons.

Bush took a photograph out of his pocket—several generations of his family posed on some cliffs by the sea—and said, "Here's the guarantee that we'll never use nuclear weapons first. This is my family, my wife, children, and grandchildren. I don't want them to die. No one on earth wants that."

I replied, "If you'll never make first use of nuclear weapons, you should announce that publicly, write it into law." Bush was silent.

On my first afternoon in Paris....we were received as guests of the Republic, with a rendition of the "Marseillaise" and impressive ceremony. It was hard to maintain a straight face as we walked between two ranks of guardsmen in dress uniform, with swords unsheathed.... On December 11, we went sightseeing in Paris. Lusia had spent a month there in 1968, and she'd been free to go wherever she wished. This time we were hemmed in by security, but we managed to visit Montmartre and the Basilica of Sacre-Coeur and to observe the famous street artists. We wanted to go to Place Pigalle and buy Lurex stockings for our fashion plates back in Moscow, but our escorts wouldn't allow it, afraid of crowds and criminals. And in fact, when walking down a neighboring street, we saw a group of young men loitering in an entryway, hands in their pockets, where I could well imagine them grasping their brass knuckles, switchblades, and other lethal weapons. We bought the stockings in a wildly expensive store, but they weren't quite what we wanted. As we drove through a district filled with sex shops and porno movies, we caught sight of a familiar couple strolling peacefully down the street. It was the gifted balladeer Bulat Okudzhava, Lusia's longtime friend, and his wife. We had to go all the way to Paris to see them.

back home

In early January 1989 (on the 6th, I believe) Gorbachev invited members of the intelligentsia—famous writers, scientists, and artists—to meet with him. There had been similar meetings before, but this was the first time I had been invited. Ryzhkov was present, but did not speak. The meeting began with Gorbachev's rather long-winded opening remarks. *Perestroika*, he declared, was entering its decisive

phase and prompt action was called for; at the same time, excessive haste should be avoided and necessary intermediate steps should not be skipped. The danger from the right and the danger from the left are equally serious. It is important to consolidate all the constructive forces in the country, to unite them around the basic principles of *perestroika*, to recognize that disagreements on specifics are permissible and even healthy so long as they don't lead to squabbling and personal hostility.

Gorbachev seemed to be trying to make peace among the various writers' groups and other cultural cliques. But it was clear from the first speeches made by writers of the Russophile wing and their ideological opponents that differences had gone too far to be so simply resolved. The speakers didn't limit themselves to culture; they discussed economic, social, ethnic, and legal issues as well. A summary of the speeches was published, but the more biting remarks, both political and personal, were omitted.

I had planned to speak, but hesitated, not quite sure what to say. When I did make up my mind, the list was too long and I was unable to get the floor.

the Plenum

The result was astonishing: at the first meeting of the Plenum all the popular candidates, including myself (I had been nominated by almost sixty institutes), Roald Sagdeev, Dmitri Likhachev, and Gavriil Popov, failed to receive the required majority of votes; only twenty-three persons passed this hurdle. The Plenum then decided to transfer five more seats to scientific societies, leaving only twenty for the Academy itself. These manipulations stirred up a storm of protest at the institutes: The rank-and-file scientists who did real research justly felt that the Plenum had disregarded its mandate (according to the law, the Plenum must "take into account" the opinion of the working collectives), and they complained about the general bureaucratic alienation of the Academy's leaders and its Presidium. The public activity sparked by the phony nominating process soon grew beyond the immediate point at issue, as so often happens. An Initiative Group was formed by the Moscow institutes to coordinate activity relating to the Academy elections, and Anatoly Shabad and A. A. Sobyain from FIAN became members.

Similar confrontations took place in other public organizations and in most election districts. Besides *apparatchiki* themselves and their tame stand-ins, alternative candidates, running on independent platforms, were nominated almost everywhere. For the first time in many years, real election contests developed in our country. And something happened that not even those of us who had led a circumscribed, lonely, and apparently hopeless struggle for civil rights in the Brezhnev era had anticipated. The people, deceived so often, surrounded by hypocrisy, corruption, crime, influence-peddling, and inertia, turned out to be alive and kicking. The possibility for change was still only a glimmer, but hope and the will for political action grew in people's hearts, and their enthusiasm made possible the emergence of the bold and independent new deputies we saw at the Congress. God help us if their expectations are frustrated—historically, there is never a last chance, but psychologically, for our generation, the disappointment might prove to be irreparable.

Of course, only a few of the progressive candidates made it to the Congress. The *apparatchiki*, bouncing back from the unexpected reverses of the first few weeks, began using all the means at their command, including forgery, stuffed ballot boxes, and their monopoly of the media in order to install their "placemen." But this at least had the effect of ensuring that those who did triumph against official opposition were tempered fighters.

I was nominated by Memorial and by many other enterprises and organizations for national district number 1, the city of Moscow. I spoke at a meeting organized by Memorial at Dom Kino, the House of Cinematographers. As I drove up, I saw a line of people extending for several hundred yards. They were a familiar-looking crowd—the kind of people you see waiting to get into a Chagall exhibition or a film festival: honest and intelligent, understanding everything, the impoverished proletariat of mental labor.

New characters were appearing on the stage of history. Just a few months later, they would fill the gigantic field next to Luzhniki Stadium. Blue-collar and white-collar workers, the masses of the intelligentsia, had been roused from passivity by *perestroika*.

On February 2 there was an unprecedented meeting of scientists from the Academy's institutes. The rally was organized by the Initiative Group for Elections which I've mentioned earlier, and permis-

sion was granted by the Moscow City Council to gather in the large square facing the mansion that houses the Academy's Presidium. Some three thousand people turned up (other estimates put the figure at more than five thousand.) Microphones were set up on the steps of the building. President Guri Marchuk, Vladimir Kotelnikov, chairman of the Academy's Election Commission, and several other Academicians peeked out occasionally from behind a curtain on the second floor. Lusia and I arrived in an Academy car. I stood in the front ranks, near the tribunal, but I didn't speak.

The purpose of the rally was to express the scientific community's opposition to the Plenum's nominating procedures of January 18 and to the views of the Presidium and the Academy leadership in general. The institutes came in entire columns, carrying banners with appropriate slogans. You could sense the excitement of thousands of people who had cast off their chains and suddenly realized that they were a powerful force, that they should and could correct an intolerable situation.

At the start of the rally, Anatoly Shabad read the slogans aloud and the crowd echoed him.

"Worthy deputies for the Congress!"

"Shame on the Presidium bureaucrats!"

"Sakharov, Sagdeev, Popov, Shmelyov—to the Congress!"

"The Presidium should resign!"

"The Presidium should resign!"

"The Academy needs a decent President!"

Gorbachev vs. Yeltsin

I just can't see an alternative to Gorbachev at this critical juncture. Even though his actions may have been prompted by historical circumstances, it has been Gorbachev's initiatives that have completely altered the country and the psychology of its people in just four years. At the same time, I don't idealize him, and I don't believe he's doing all that's needed. Furthermore, I think it's extremely dangerous to concentrate unlimited power in the hands of a single man. But none of this changes the fact that there is no alternative to Gorbachev. I have repeated these words many times in many places—Gorbachev's face lit up with joy and triumph when I said them once again at the pre-Congress planning session.

Now, about Yeltsin. I respect him, but he is a person of a different caliber than Gorbachev. Yeltsin's popularity is to some extent dependent on Gorbachev's "unpopularity," since Yeltsin is regarded as the opposition to, and victim of, the existing regime. This is the main explanation of his phenomenal success (five or six million votes, 87 percent of the total) in the elections for deputy from the city of Moscow.

Congress of People's Deputies: May 1989

Gavriil Popov spoke after me. He tried to find a compromise on the agenda (based on the maxim, which he repeated, that politics is the art of the possible). The majority of the Congress, however, was not prepared for any compromise—that became clear both to the delegates and to the viewers at home.

Subsequently, the very logic of the debates and the whole course of the Congress led to radicalization of many deputies. The number voting with us on critical issues increased continually. Of course, quite a few conservative deputies couldn't be moved by any arguments or facts, but many others proved capable of revising their ideas. If the Congress had lasted another week, it's just possible that the "left" minority would have become a majority.

Much more important, a similar evolution was taking place across the entire country, where everyone remained glued to their television sets. Interest in the broadcasts was extraordinary. People watched at home and at work, and some took vacations so they could watch all day.

Wherever people gathered—in factories, in offices, on public transportation, in stores—the Congress was the main topic of conversation.

What was its main political outcome? It didn't resolve the question of power, since its composition and Gorbachev's attitude made that impossible. Therefore it couldn't lay the foundation for dealing effectively with economic, social, and environmental problems. All that is work for the future, and life is spurring us on. But the twelve days of the Congress completely demolished the illusions that had lulled everyone in our country and the rest of the world to sleep. Speeches by people from the four corners of the country, from both left and right, painted a merciless picture of what life is really like in our society—the impression in the minds of millions of people tran-

scended anyone's personal experience, however tragic it might be, as well as the cumulative efforts of newspapers, television, literature, movies, and the other mass media in all the years of *glasnost*. The psychological and political repercussions were enormous, and they will persist. The Congress burned all bridges behind us. It became clear to everyone that we must go forward or we will be destroyed.

Lusia and I worked out a routine for the days of the Congress. In the morning I was driven to the Kremlin, to the Spassky Tower, by an Academy driver, and then walked from there in about five minutes to the Palace of Congresses. Lusia watched the proceedings on TV. (Sometimes her cousin Zora or some friend from Moscow or Leningrad would call, asking excitedly, "Did you hear what they said? What does it mean?") As soon as a break was announced, Lusia dashed to the car, drove to Spassky Tower, and waited for me at the chain that blocked off much of Red Square from everyone but deputies and officials. When I emerged, we rode to the Rossiya Hotel for lunch, and then Lusia drove me back to the Kremlin and returned to her television set. She would pick me up again at night when the session was over.

THE FIRST DAY of the Congress focused on the election of the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet. During a break, Alexander Yakovlev came over to me and said, "You spoke well. But now the important thing is to help Mikhail Sergeyevich. He has taken on enormous responsibility, and it's very difficult for him as a person. In effect he's turning around the whole country single-handedly. Electing him means guaranteeing *perestroika*."

I said, "I know there's no alternative to Gorbachev, I've always said that. But now I have more reservations."

Yakovlev: "Too bad! You're greatly mistaken, and..."

Suddenly we were surrounded by people. Yakovlev broke off in midsentence and walked away.

Speaking before the Congress for the second time on opening day, I explained my position carefully, "I want to return to what I said this morning. My support for Gorbachev in today's election is conditional. It depends on the discussion of fundamental political issues.... We can't allow the election to be simply formality—if that's what it becomes, I'll abstain from voting."

a talk with Gorbachev

Over the course of the last year I had become increasingly troubled by Gorbachev's domestic policies. The enormous gap between words and deeds in the economic, social, and political spheres has worried me greatly, and continues to do so.

In the field of politics, I'm concerned about Gorbachev's obvious desire to obtain unlimited personal power and his consistent orientation not toward the progressive forces favoring *perestroika* but toward complaint and controllable ones, even if they are reactionary. This has been made manifest by his attitude toward the Memorial Society and his behavior at the Congress, and also in his approach to ethnic problems, where he displays a prejudice against Armenians and Balts.

I'm disturbed by the lack of real change for the better in the situation of almost all classes of society.

All these concerns led me to feel that a frank talk with Gorbachev could be important. At the start of the morning session on June 1, I went up to the dais and told Gorbachev that I would like to speak to him one on one. All day I was on pins and needles. After the evening session, I reminded one of Gorbachev's secretaries of my request-, he returned a few minutes later and said that Mikhail Sergeyevich was speaking with members of the Georgian delegation, that this would take a fairly long while, and it would probably be better to postpone the conversation to the following morning. But I told him that I would wait. I took a chair and sat down next to the door to the room where Gorbachev's meeting was taking place. I could see the enormous hall of the Palace of Congresses, dimly lit and deserted except for the guards at the doors.

After half an hour or so, Gorbachev emerged—accompanied by Lukyanov, which I hadn't anticipated, but there was nothing I could do about it. Gorbachev looked tired, as did I. We moved three chairs to the corner of the stage. Gorbachev was very serious throughout the conversation. His usual smile for me—half kindly, half condescending—never once appeared on his face.

Sakharov: "Mikhail Sergeyevich, there's no need for me to tell you how serious things are in the country, how dissatisfied people are, and how everyone expects things to get even worse. There's a crisis of trust in the leadership and the Party. Your personal authority has

dropped almost to zero. People can't wait any longer with nothing but promises to sustain them. A middle course in a situation like this is almost impossible. The country and you personally are at a cross-roads—either accelerate the process of change to the maximum or try to retain the administrative-command system in all of its aspects. In the first case you will have to rely on the left and you'll be able to count on the support of many brave and energetic people. In the second case, you know yourself whose support you'll have, but they will never forgive you for backing *perestroika*."

Gorbachev: "I stand firmly for the ideas of *perestroika*. I'm tied to them forever. But I'm against running around like a chicken with its head cut off. We've seen many 'big leaps,' and the results have always been tragedy and backtracking. I know everything that's being said about me. But I'm convinced that the people will understand my policies."

Sakharov: "At the Congress we're not dealing with the main political issue—the transfer of all power to the soviets, that is, elimination of the dual power of the Party and the soviets, which now favors the former. We need a Decree on Power, which will turn over to the Congress all legislative powers and the selection of key officials. Only then will we really have government by the people and escape from the tricks of the apparatus which still, in actual fact, controls legislative and personnel policy. The Supreme Soviet elected by the Congress doesn't seem competent or enterprising enough to do the job required. The country will still be run by the same old people, the same system of ministries and official agencies, and the Supreme Soviet will be almost powerless."

Gorbachev: "The Congress itself can't deal with all the laws—there are just too many of them. That's why we need a Supreme Soviet that will meet regularly. But you, the Moscow Group, wanted to play at democracy, and as a result many key people didn't get elected to the Supreme Soviet, people we had planned to include in the commissions and committees. You spoiled many things, but we're trying to fix what we can, for instance, to make Popov deputy chairman of a committee. There are new people everywhere—for instance, Abalkin will be Ryzhkov's deputy."

Sakharov: "The Gdlyan affair isn't only a question of violations of the law, although that is very important, but for the people it's a question of confidence in the system, of faith in the leadership. It's too bad that Kudrin wasn't appointed chairman of the commission: he's a worker, a former judge, a former Party member. The people would have trusted him."

Lukyanov broke in at this point: "Kudrin's whole election campaign revolved around the Gdlyan affair. He can't be impartial." (In fact, the Gdlyan affair was not the central issue in Kudrin's campaign.)

Sakharov: "I'm very concerned that the only political result of the Congress will be your achievement of unlimited personal power—the "18th Brumaire" in contemporary dress. You got this power without elections; you weren't even on the slate of candidates for the Supreme Soviet, and you became its chairman without being a member."

Gorbachev: "What's the matter, didn't you want me to be elected?"

Sakharov: "You know that's not the case, that in my opinion no alternative to you exists. But I'm talking about principles, not personalities. And besides, you're vulnerable to pressure, to blackmail by people who control the channels of information. Even now they're saying that you took bribes in Stavropol, 160,000 rubles has been mentioned. A provocation? Then they'll find something else. Only election by the people can protect you from attack."

Gorbachev: "I'm absolutely clean. And I'll never submit to blackmail—not from the right, not from the left!"

Gorbachev spoke these last words firmly, without any visible sign of irritation. And on that note our meeting ended. I didn't record it at the time, so I'm once again relying on my memory. It's quite possible that I've made some mistake in the order of the subjects discussed or in the precise words used, but I'm quite sure that I've reported the substance of Gorbachev's statements accurately.

Our conversation had no concrete consequences, and none could have been expected. But it seems to me that sometimes a frank conversation is necessary, but only if there is mutual respect, of course.

"Well, Mikhail, that's it!"

JUNE 9 WAS the last day of the Congress. After several speeches, a motion was made to end debate on Ryzhkov's report and to adopt the resolution on "The Basic Directions of Domestic and Foreign Policy of the USSR," subject to revision by an editorial commission. At that moment Lukyanov turned to Gorbachev and said with relief, "Well, Mikhail, that's it!" His words weren't audible in the hall, but television viewers could hear them, because the microphones were still on. (Lusia noted this, and also another, earlier remark by Lukyanov, prompting Gorbachev to change the formulation of a certain decision.) Obviously, Lukyanov felt that all the difficulties of the Congress were behind them. But he was mistaken. The few remaining hours of the Congress saw dramatic events that altered its psychological impact and political outcome.

The deputies insisted on a continuation of the debate, but accepted a five-minute limit on speeches. A long line formed in the aisle leading to the rostrum—many delegates had not yet had any opportunity at all to address the Congress. In brief, emphatic remarks they now described the grievances of their districts, criticized specific points of the concluding document, and suggested some important amendments and additions to the sections on social problems and the economy. One of the last to approach the tribune was Shapovalenko, the deputy from Orenburg, who read out the manifesto of the Interregional Group. Gorbachev was caught off guard; perhaps, if he'd known Shapovalenko's intention ahead of time, he'd have tried to stop him, but he hadn't expected a non-Muscovite to make this sort of mischief.

Gorbachev was obviously alarmed. He said, "Since we'll be dealing with purely internal affairs from now on, let's end the broadcast of the proceedings. Who supports the motion?"

Several hands shot up, and someone shouted, "Yes!" but the majority started at Gorbachev in astonishment, not understanding what was happening. I rushed to the Presidium and started saying excitedly that this was a violation of ... I couldn't remember at that moment what it was that was being violated, but later I recalled that Gorbachev himself had promised uninterrupted broadcasting of the Congress proceedings. just at this moment the cameras were turned off, and millions of viewers saw a completely bewildered anchor-

woman on the screen saying that the broadcast from the Kremlin Palace of Congresses was over (with no explanation, not even the usual "technical difficulties"). Then the transition was switched over to the second half of a soccer match.

Apparently the broadcast had been stopped without warning to the television center. Some disgruntled viewers turned off their TVs and went back to work or resumed their household chores. Others waited for something to happen. Zora called Lusia, who was as much in the dark as everyone else.

What had caused Gorbachev to panic? Very likely he was worried that other surprises might follow Shapovalenko's speech and that he might feel compelled to act in a manner that he would rather not have the whole world watch. In any event, he was certainly making plain his desire to keep *glasnost*s within definite limits.

In his confusion, Gorbachev had evidently forgotten that he still had a pleasant surprise up his sleeve for the deputies and the public at large. Regaining his composure and seeing that there was no mutiny in the offing, he had the cameras turned back on. He then recognized Lukyanov, who announced that the Presidium, in deference to the request of many deputies, was proposing the removal of Article 11-i from the Decree of April 8 on the grounds that the ambiguity of its operative term, "defamation," lent itself to abuse. I again rushed over to the Presidium and almost shouted, "And what about Article 7 and the principle that only actions involving violence or a call to violence can be considered criminal?"

Lukyanov smiled and said, "Wait, it's all coming.... The Presidium also proposes a revision of Article 7, replacing the words 'anti-constitutional acts' with the words 'violent acts.' The final text will be prepared by legal experts, but we believe that the change we suggest will satisfy everyone, even though we feel that the original wording meant the same thing." The deputies, myself included, applauded and many stood. Of course, it was necessary to show this on TV.

The Congress was coming to a close, but I persisted in my attempts to get the floor and finally, just before the final curtain, Gorbachev gave it to me. At that moment a deputy from the Theatrical Union jumped up and asked angrily why I was being allowed to speak for the umpteenth time, when the director of their organization, Kirill Lavrov, hadn't spoken even once. But Gorbachev ignored her. He tried to limit my remarks to five minutes; I demanded fifteen

on the grounds that I would be speech dealing with issues of principles. Gorbachev refused to make this further concession.

I began speaking, with the time limit still in dispute, hoping to get my fifteen minutes through sheer stubbornness. In fact, I managed to speak for thirteen or fourteen minutes....I concluded with a plea to Gorbachev to let Starovoitova read the Appeal on China, signed by more than 120 deputies. When I saw that it wasn't in the cards, I said a few words of my own on the subject. By then Gorbachev had turned off the loudspeakers in the hall, so that only the deputies in the first few rows could hear me, but the microphones were still live and the television and radio audience heard everything I said!

I feel that my statement was significant not only for its analysis of the facts and its specific proposals—it was important in a psychological and political sense. My speech, coming after the announcement of the Interregional Group, the defeat of the proposal to form a Committee on Constitutional Oversight, and the discussions of the two last days, helped the Congress end on a more radical, more constructive, and more inspiring note than might have been expected just a few days earlier. And that evening we felt like victors. But our triumph was tinged with a sense of the tragedy and complexity of the general situation, with an understanding of all the difficulties and dangers that lay ahead in the near term and in the more distant future. If our view of the world can be called optimism, then it is a tragic optimism.

epilogue

A FEW DAYS AFTER my conversation with Lukyanov, Lusia and I left for Europe and then the United States. This book was largely written in Newton and in Westwood, Massachusetts, in the homes of Lusia's children. She is sitting beside me, finishing work on her childhood memoirs.

Of course, completing a book gives one a sense of crossing a frontier, of finality. As Pushkin put it, "Why is this strange sadness troubling me?" At the same time, there is an awareness of the powerful flow of life, which began before us and will continue after us.

There is the miracle of science. I don't believe that we will come up with a theory that can explain everything in the universe anytime soon (and perhaps never), but I have seen fantastic advances just in the course of my own lifetime, and there is no reason to expect the stream to dry up: on the contrary, I believe it will broaden and branch out.

What lies ahead for the Soviet Union? The Congress shifted the engine of change into a higher gear. The miners' strike is something new, and it is only the first reaction to a "scissors effect," the growing disparity between expanding public awareness of our situation and the marking of time on the official level with respect to the real political, economic, social, and ethnic issues. Only a radicalization of *perestroika* can overcome the crisis without a disastrous move into reverse. The speeches of the left at the Congress marked out the rough outlines for this radicalization, but the main job still lies ahead—working together to complete the design.

How should we deal with global issues? I am convinced that their solution demands convergence—the process that has already begun of the pluralistic transformation of capitalist and socialist societies (in the USSR it's called *perestroika*). The immediate goal is the creation of a system that is efficient (which means a market and competition), socially just, and ecologically responsible.

A few words about my own family, children, and grandchildren. There is much I have failed to do, sometimes because of my natural disposition to procrastinate, sometimes because of sheer physical impossibility, sometimes because of the resistance of my daughters and son which I could not overcome. But I have never stopped thinking about this.

And finally, Lusia, my wife. Truly, she is the only person who shares my inner thoughts and feelings. Lusia prompts me to understand much that I would otherwise miss because of my restrained personality, and to act accordingly. She is a great organizer, and serves as my brain center. We are together. This gives life meaning.

Andrei Sakharov died of a heart attack on December 14, 1989, after returning from a grueling session at the second Congress of People's Deputies. Earlier that day, he had dictated to Elena Bonner the Russian text of the preface that appears on page 2 of this Forum.

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